

U.S. Department of Education
2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 12NE2

School Type (Public Schools): ☐ Charter ☒ Title 1 ☐ Magnet ☐ Choice
(Check all that apply, if any)

Name of Principal: Mr. Steve Dennis

Official School Name: Elgin Elementary School

School Mailing Address: 101 North 4th Street
PO Box 399
Elgin, NE 68636-0399

County: Antelope State School Code Number*: 02-0018-002

Telephone: (402) 843-2455 E-mail: sdennis@esu8.org

Fax: (402) 843-2475 Web site/URL: www.elgineagles.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. Steve Dennis Superintendent e-mail: sdennis@esu8.org

District Name: Elgin Public Schools District Phone: (402) 843-2455

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mrs. Laurie Waterbury

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

**Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

12NE2

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2011-2012 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2006.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 or 2011.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 (per district designation): 0 Middle/Junior high schools
1 High schools
0 K-12 schools
2 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 18760

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Small city or town in a rural area
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2011 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0		6	5	6	11
K	7	6	13		7	0	0	0
1	6	5	11		8	0	0	0
2	5	7	12		9	0	0	0
3	2	7	9		10	0	0	0
4	5	2	7		11	0	0	0
5	7	6	13		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:								76

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
0 % Asian
0 % Black or African American
1 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
98 % White
0 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2010-2011 school year: 16%
 This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	5
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	7
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	12
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	76
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.16
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	16

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 0%
 Total number of ELL students in the school: 0
 Number of non-English languages represented: 0
 Specify non-English languages:

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 58%

Total number of students who qualify: 45

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 17%

Total number of students served: 13

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>1</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>1</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>8</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>2</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>
Total number	<u>9</u>	<u>14</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 8:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Daily student attendance	99%	96%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2011 are doing as of Fall 2011.

Graduating class size:	_____
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	_____ %
Enrolled in a community college	_____ %
Enrolled in vocational training	_____ %
Found employment	_____ %
Military service	_____ %
Other	_____ %
Total	_____ 0%

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

☒ No

☐ Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

PART III - SUMMARY

12NE2

The Elgin Public School District #18 is located in the town of Elgin, Nebraska with a population of 661. The school serves children from Antelope, Boone, and Wheeler Counties in northeastern Nebraska. Elgin Elementary School has 61 students enrolled in kindergarten through sixth grade. Total enrollment for the district, preschool through twelfth grade, is 173 students. Also located within the city limits of Elgin are two private parochial schools, St. Boniface Elementary and Pope John XIII High School. Elgin Public School and Pope John XIII High School began a sports cooperative in the fall of 2009. The two schools coop to form one sports team now known as the Wolfpack. Elgin Public/Pope John is classified by the Nebraska Activities Association as a Class C-2 school.

Our school's mission statement is: "The Elgin Public Schools exists to serve and nurture the experiences of the students in a manner which will allow them to function competently in all facets of society. The School's responsibility is to ensure that students gain the skills and knowledge to function as creative, discerning, and productive members of a global society." The vision of the staff is: "To empower students to become productive, lifelong learners of the 21st century." Elgin Public School is also a member of the Northern Tier. The membership of this organization consists of nine other smaller school districts in northeastern Nebraska. With size and geographic similarities the schools work together regarding school improvement endeavors. By pooling resources a number of the members were able to implement Reading Mastery at their elementary schools. The state of Nebraska also recognizes the Northern Tier and has allowed the ten districts to work together for their official school improvement requirements. The current school improvement goal for the Northern Tier interlocal and Elgin Pubic School is: "All students who participate in the NeSA subject assessments will meet the Met or Exceed levels at 85%."

Elgin Elementary School is a Schoolwide Title I Program and is accredited by the Nebraska Department of Education. We offer a half-day preschool program and all day/every day kindergarten. Our elementary class size typically ranges from 7 to 15 students. Educational Service Unit 8 in Neligh, Nebraska provides resource staff in the area of special education as well as workshops, trainings, and inservices on a variety of educational topics. Approximately 60% of our elementary students qualify for free or reduced lunches. Our elementary student population is primarily white, 96%, with 4% being Hispanic. Approximately 16% of our elementary students option into our district from neighboring districts. This choice of attending another school district is outlined through provisions in the Nebraska Department of Education's Rule 19, Regulations Regarding School Enrollment.

One of the strengths of our elementary school is our teachers. The average tenure of the elementary teachers is close to 20 years of teaching experience at Elgin Public Schools. The teachers and staff work hard, take pride, and attend workshops and trainings to ensure students achieve educational goals. The incorporation of technology into classroom instruction has been one point of focus. All of the elementary classrooms are now equipped with a Promethean Board to help facilitate this focus. Along with an elementary computer lab there is also a mobile lab of laptop computers for elementary student use.

Reading Mastery is used in grades kindergarten through third for reading instruction. A ninety minute reading block is scheduled for Reading Mastery instruction. Fourth grade through sixth grade use the Scott Foresman reading series. DIBELS is used to assess students on Phonological Awareness, Alphabetic Principle, Accuracy and Fluency, Vocabulary and Comprehension. The Accelerated Reader Program is also incorporated in the elementary classrooms. Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) testing is administered in grades three through six. This information provides another avenue to assess student achievement. A majority of our students are at the proficient or advanced level of achievement on the Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA) testing.

1. Assessment Results:

A. The model for assessing student achievement has changed at the Elgin Public Schools and in the state of Nebraska the past number of years. In 2000 legislation was passed in Nebraska requiring assessment of student performance based on content standards. This mandate led to STARS (School-based Teacher-led Assessment and Reporting System). This resulted in the development of a local assessment system to measure student performance on standards. Elgin Elementary School also used an assessment system coordinated by Paul Ekberg. As the criteria for STARS was clear, measurable, and taught within the curriculum nearly 100% of our students met the proficient level.

The CTB Terra Nova was the nationally normed assessment used by the district in past years. This testing was coordinated with the Northern Tier schools. The testing was traditionally administered in the spring. It was then decided to move the testing dates to the fall for the 2009-10 school year. Elgin Public School then elected to switch to the use Northwest Evaluation Association's MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) for the nationally normed assessment. We began testing using MAP during the fall of 2010. We test the students twice during the school year, once in the fall and once in the spring. With the changing of assessments we are working on establishing baseline data.

The state of Nebraska replaced the STARS with NeSA (Nebraska State Accountability) assessments beginning with reading in the spring of 2010. During the spring of 2011 reading was given for the second year and first year of math assessment was added. Science is to be added during the spring of 2012. These tests have been developed by the Nebraska Department of Education to be administered statewide to students in selected grades three through eleven. Again, we are establishing our baseline data.

B. Elgin Elementary School evaluates data and results from a number of assessment sources in determining the instructional needs and the achievement level of our students. Included among these sources throughout the years are: Nebraska STARS assessments, CTB Terra Nova testing, DIBELS data, reading series assessments, MAP testing, and NeSA results. Our general analysis of the data indicates that the longer a student has attended Elgin Elementary School the better his/her score typically is. The primary subgroup that has a significant number of students not scoring at the proficient level is the special education subgroup. The other two major sub groups used for our data are gender and socio-economic students. We are proud of the fact that even though approximately 58% of our elementary students are on free or reduced lunches approximately 94% achieved at the proficient/exceeds levels on the 2011 NeSA reading and math assessments.

In review of our STARS data we noted that nearly 100% of our elementary students were at the proficient/advanced level of achievement in both reading and mathematics. One reason for this high success rate may be in the fact that the criteria and assessments were aligned with the district's curriculum and were also developed locally based on state expectations. Students were also tested periodically on a portion of the assessment. With knowledge of what was expected students were able to successfully master the task. In addition to classroom instruction the Elgin Public Schools also subscribed to an on-line computer service managed by Paul Ekberg. This tool provided practice tests for the students as well as helping the staff document the testing results.

Beginning in the 2010-11 school year Elgin Elementary School begin to incorporate MAP testing for all students in grades three through six. We are in the infancy stage of beginning to tap the possibilities provided by MAP testing. Students are tested twice during the school year, once in the fall and once in the spring. The test will generate a RIT score for a number of subject areas, including reading and mathematics. The RIT scale is a curriculum scale that uses individual item difficulty values to estimate

student achievement. The scores produced by MAP assessments allow educators to see each student's level of achievement around specific concepts. This information can be used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each student, allowing for the appropriate level of instruction. In comparing our students' RIT scores 64% of our students are above the National Norms in the area of reading. In math 60% of our students achieved above the National Norms.

The state of Nebraska NeSA testing is another important source of information. This testing is mandated for all elementary students in grades three through six. NeSA testing began in the spring of 2010 with reading. In the initial year of testing, Elgin Elementary School had 75% of our elementary students score at the proficient/advanced levels. In that testing sample six of the eleven students scoring at the below level were in one grade. Various interventions were incorporated in reading instruction across the elementary. The results for the 2011 NeSA reading test revealed that 93.5% of our elementary students achieved at the proficient/advanced levels.

The spring of 2011 was the first year for NeSA math assessments. The results showed that 91.3% of our elementary students scored at the proficient/advanced levels. We are reviewing the data, celebrating the successes, and analyzing areas in which we can improve. Elgin Elementary School has high expectations for all students with the goal of seeing no significant difference in scores across the various subgroups.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Students in grades K-6 at Elgin Elementary School are assessed with the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) reading assessment test three times a year. The results from these tests provide data of how the students are doing and if immediate interventions need to be provided. Students having difficulties in certain areas their reading progress are monitored more frequently than students who are making acceptable progress. This monitoring may be weekly or monthly. A team of teachers looks at the data to see which students need additional resources.

Assessment drives our school improvement goals. At Elgin Public School we established our school improvement goal through much deliberation and data analysis from multiple assessments. Our school improvement goal has been to improve students reading comprehension skills across the curriculum. In order for us to evaluate our progress towards meeting our school improvement goal, a triangulation of data from the State Standard Assessments, NeSA (Nebraska State Accountability) testing, Accelerated Reader, and DIBELS and MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) testing are done for grades three through sixth and locally administered reading assessment were used. From this data our faculty gets together to develop and refine instruction that is driven by student performance. During these meetings we analyze and determine current ideas and strategies and consider new ideas and strategies to improve student performance. This information is used should a change of interventions that we feel are not meeting the needs of improved student performance be needed. It is through these meetings that the staff re-evaluates the current strategies and their success rate to create new strategies to improve and enhance student performance,

We also used our reading assessment data to help us in the selection of a new reading series for our K-6 elementary program. We have found that in reviewing assessment data it helps both teaching and learning instruction and comprehension. All other academic areas are addressed through our district developed curriculum based standards or by the Nebraska State Standards. Our teachers use both formative and summative assessment information to improve their instruction and to improve learning for the Elgin Public School students.

Elgin Public School realizes the importance of assessment scores and what we need to do to help every student learn, achieve, and be successful. We communicate our assessment results in a variety of ways to our stakeholders. This would include posting results on the school webpage, including information in the school newsletter, and sharing results at Parent Teacher Conferences. We have two Parent-Teacher Conferences that we schedule each year. One is held during the first semester and one is held during the

second semester. At this time we can hand results personally to each parent and explain what the test results mean. The teacher can share with parents where their child's current level of achievement and areas in which they need to improve.

Elgin Public Schools is proud of our assessment results. However, we must be careful how results are presented as some of our class rosters are less than ten students. Another source used to share our results in our local newspaper, The Elgin Review. We also provide patrons a link to the Nebraska Department of Education our school website, www.elgineagles.org, where they can access the State of the School Reports. Among information included in the State of the Schools Report is demographic data, NeSA results, yearly AYP, etc. We also produce a quarterly school newsletter that goes out to our community patrons, in which assessment information is periodically included. We feel as a public school district it is very important to get this type of information to our students, parents, and community.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Lessons, activities, materials and even concerns are all shared among the Northern Tier Schools. Being a member of the Northern Tier has truly benefited Elgin Public Schools. For the last 4 school years, the Northern Tier has chosen a day for teachers within the consortium to gather at a school and collaborate on lessons and activities that are being used in the classroom. Teachers have been asked to bring Science or Social Studies units that they were willing to share or simply discuss different ways that they teach their curriculum. We have also brought in technology facilitators to present to the group of teachers. Training for Reading Mastery has also been reviewed at these meetings. Within the Northern Tier there is also a Literacy Council that meets quarterly to assess and identify resources, guide decisions, and explore research that can be used in the classroom. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Literacy Council member returns to Elgin Public and shares the objectives from the meeting. As a Reading Mastery school, many books and materials are shared among the Northern Tier schools, as well as sharing a Reading Coach.

Elgin Public is also a member of ESU8 and teachers regularly participate in the professional development meetings. Throughout these meetings, many educators from the surrounding area share ideas, discuss, and collaborate on successful strategies to be implemented in the classroom.

During this past school year, Elgin Public joined the Check 4 Learning Cadre. This is a testing system that can be used to prepare students for the NeSA assessments. Local teachers had to write questions to share with the cadre and now we have access to all of the questions in the collection to use to assist our students to be ready for the NeSA assessments.

The last day of each school week, our local board has arranged for the staff to meet in order to share ideas among our staff. During the in-services throughout the year teachers also work with each other and collaborate on lessons and curriculum.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Elgin Public realizes the importance of being a team for a student to succeed. The team not only consists of the teachers and staff but also the families and the community. Elgin Public Schools does a great job utilizing many resources to communicate our students' successes and learning to the public. Our website is updated daily with our school bulletin, and is continually being updated by our teachers and staff with happenings of the classroom. Teachers also submit their lesson plans onto the website weekly along with a PASS system in which parents and students can see their grades at any time. From the monthly calendar and activities to accomplishments in a classroom, our website: www.elgineagles.org is very current and informative for the public.

Another resource that Elgin Public School uses is a quarterly newsletter. It is sent to every patron in Elgin and again tells about the accomplishments and activities of the Elgin students. Our local newspaper, the Elgin Review, also publishes stories about our students and reports the state results given to them by the Nebraska Department of Education.

Each semester we hold parent-teacher conferences. In the fall, teachers handout student data from the different assessments and explain what the results mean. They also give parents an overview of expectations for their coursework and answer any questions the teacher or student may have. Students are encouraged to attend the conference with their parents. During the second semester a student-led conference is held. Each student is required to prepare a portfolio for the spring conference and must actively lead the discussion during the conference. The portfolio is a showcase of class work completed during the school year. Teachers prepare progress reports for each student with helpful suggestions on improving their work. Students must also reflect on each class with goals and actions necessary to improve their learning. The student-led conference provides an opportunity for students and parents to actively dialogue about their academic work.

Teachers provide student information to parents quarterly using report cards. For students that may struggle, teachers keep parents informed on grades using email, a phone call, or a letter written home.

Elgin Public Schools corresponds with parents and citizens on student accomplishments using technology, our newsletter, local paper, and simply by communicating personally to parents. The teachers, administration, and staff know that it takes a team to help a student succeed.

1. Curriculum:

The curriculum of Elgin Public Elementary School has been aligned to the Nebraska State Standards. The core curriculum areas of Elgin Public Elementary include reading, language arts, science, social studies, and math. Other areas of our curriculum include art, computer technology, physical education/health, music, Spanish and guidance. Teachers use a variety of strategies and resources to create effective instructional programs. Each elementary classroom including Title I and Special Education has a Promethean ActivBoard to enhance student learning in all curricular areas. Elgin Public Elementary teachers and students also have access to mobile laptop carts, a desktop computer lab and a Polycom cart. Teachers hold high expectations for each child and encourage them to be independent learners. Elgin Public has a school-wide Title I program in which we are able to serve all students' needs in reading and math.

Reading and language arts instruction include a variety of reading strategies such as large group, small group, guided reading and direct instruction. Teachers focus reading instruction on alphabetic principle, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Language arts instruction focuses on providing students with the opportunity to enhance reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

The math curriculum includes an understanding of number sense, geometric/measurement, algebra, data analysis and probability. Teachers focus math instruction on routine computations, hands-on manipulation and an understanding of mathematical concepts to help students become problem solvers and critical thinkers in our everyday world.

The science curriculum includes inquiry, nature of science, technology, physical science, life science, and earth/space sciences. The curriculum is designed to help students develop scientific inquiry skills through the use of investigations, vocabulary, hands-on experiments and research.

The social studies curriculum includes Nebraska History, American History, geography, civics and economics. The curriculum is designed to allow students to obtain a better understanding of the diverse world we live in and enables them to get a sense of their place in society. Teachers use a wide variety of instructional practices. Textbooks are used as a source of information along with the incorporation of instructional videos, maps and technology into lessons to enhance student learning.

Elgin Public Elementary provides regularly scheduled art, computer technology, physical education/health, music, Spanish and guidance classes. Art classes are offered to K-6 students two-three times per week. The Art curriculum provides an introduction to various medias, focusing on art as a developmentally creative process. Annually student art work is judged and displayed for public viewing at the county fair. Computer technology classes are provided for grades 3-6 two times per week. Students gain exposure to keyboarding skills, computer applications and different uses of technology. Physical education/health classes are offered to K-6 students two-three times per week. Students participate in the Presidential Fitness tests and Jump Rope for Heart programs each year. Music classes are provided two-three times per week for students in grades K-6. Students perform a winter and spring concert for community members. The fifth and sixth grade students are offered instrumental music and also perform at the winter and spring concerts. Spanish instruction for grades K-6 is offered once per week. Students gain an exposure to the Spanish language through a variety of instructional strategies. Guidance instruction is offered once per week to grades K-6. The Guidance curriculum is based upon the six pillars of character: respect, responsibility, caring, citizenship, fairness and trustworthiness.

2. Reading/English:

The reading curriculum at Elgin Public Elementary School is part of the language arts curriculum. The concepts and skills of this curriculum are aligned with the Nebraska State Standards. Our belief is that our students in grades K-3 are learning to read, and students in grades 4-6 are reading to learn.

The Reading Mastery program is used in grade K-3. It was chosen because it incorporates perhaps the largest variety of instructional techniques. It is a strategy based instruction that allows students to learn more efficiently. Reading Mastery addresses all five essential components of reading as identified by Reading First: phonemic awareness, phonics and word analysis, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Research has shown it to be superior in involving students of all ability levels. Students are grouped according to their ability and groups are adjusted throughout the school year. Our teachers incorporate a 90-minute block of time each day for Reading Mastery. In grades 4 – 6 Houghton Mifflin is used because it enhances student reading skills allowing them to capitalize on previous learning and develop comprehension skills.

Students in grades K-6 are given the DIBELS Next reading assessment benchmark test three times a year. The results determine students needing progress monitoring or other interventions. Our school participates in a Literacy Council group. Our representative meets with us following every monthly meeting to inform us of any new strategies we can incorporate in our interventions to enable all students to reach benchmarks. Accelerated Reading STAR test in grades 1 – 6 is used to determine students' reading level in the Accelerated Reader program. Accelerated Reader is research based and follows best practices for our classroom teachers. Our elementary library has a rich collection of books. Many elementary teachers have their own library for classroom enrichment.

We see literacy as a fundamental academic asset and our goal is to develop literate life-long learners who read, write, speak, and listen effectively.

3. Mathematics:

The mathematics curriculum at Elgin Elementary School focuses on the conceptual understanding of mathematics concepts and the development of students' higher-order thinking skills. Grades K-6 all use the Sadlier-Oxford "Progress in Mathematics" series. Our mathematics program places a strong emphasis on a step-by-step approach to problem solving, understanding math vocabulary, and coming to see how different mathematical processes are interrelated. Both formative and summative assessments are administered frequently in order to measure mastery of the standards and concepts, and to monitor students' progress throughout the lessons. A variety of teaching methods, questioning strategies, and hands-on activities are used during instruction. The interactive Promethean Boards in each elementary classroom allow the teachers to incorporate a great deal of technology into lessons. Students are asked to respond to questions orally, in written or picture form, and with hands-on objects.

In addition to classroom assessments, we use standardized tests to help determine the level of standard and concept mastery the students have achieved. The students take the online Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests in both the fall and the spring. With the benefit of almost immediate results, teachers are able to use information from this feedback and use it when planning and teaching lessons. Students also take the Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA) test for mathematics in the spring. Although not immediate, the results of this standardized test are also a useful assessment tool for teachers.

Some students who are behind or struggling with math go to the Title I room to receive extra practice and instruction for important mathematical concepts. Students also have the option of extra one-on-one instruction time with teachers after school. Teachers aim to give students real world examples and applications of concepts to enrich and challenge students and to show them the importance of mathematics beyond the classroom.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Our science curriculum aligns with the Nebraska State Standards and the Elgin Public School curriculum guide. We use the Harcourt School Publishers Science series for our K-6 grades. An important goal of our science education program is to help students develop the skills they need to think like scientists in their pursuit of understanding. Instructional units contain investigations, vocabulary, hands-on activities as well as home link activities to extend the concepts. Teachers include in their daily lessons opportunities to incorporate Promethean boards and other technology to help with the concepts of science.

Our Science is generally organized through the strands of physical science, life science, and earth and space science. Students are given an opportunity to learn from direct instruction, in-depth reading of texts and enrichment materials, study guides, written and oral questioning, demonstration, and lab investigation and research. The students have access to well-equipped labs to carry out and analyze data that is generated from individual and small group experimentation. The student's access to a lab with hands on experimentation is vital to the learning process. The program stresses hands-on activities to develop inquiry and thinking skills. The program is structured to help students realize that science is part of everyday life and affects all individuals.

5. Instructional Methods:

We, as teachers at the Elgin Public Elementary School, understand the importance of differentiated instruction and meeting the needs of our students. Due to an increased number of low socio- economic students in recent years, our focus toward differentiated instruction has become more imperative. As a result of this trend, there exists a need to develop a wide range of skills to prepare students for future educational experiences.

One avenue that Elgin Public School has implemented is a computer-based adaptive testing system called Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) for grades 3-11. Given each fall and spring, the goal of this system is to measure student achievement and academic growth. Also, it predicts success on state-mandated testing, as well as providing reports that enable the teacher to streamline teaching strategies, provides differentiated instruction, and allows flexible grouping for our students.

In primary grades, Reading Mastery allows students to work in small instructional groups based on their performance levels. This direct instruction approach to reading is a highly scripted method for teaching, and our data shows that even the most disadvantaged students are showing great strides. The Houghton-Mifflin Reading Series is incorporated in grades 4-6. This program enhances students' reading skills allowing them to capitalize on previous learning. Students needing additional support have other resources available to meet their needs.

In grades K-6, teachers have been trained to administer and interpret DIBELS Next data. We meet as a staff monthly to look at progress monitoring data and determine appropriate interventions for students who are not meeting benchmark. We also learn strategies to use in the classroom that relate to the five components of reading. The staff has also examined DIBELS data for the last six years.

In addition, grades 1-8 utilize the Accelerated Reading STAR test to determine each student's reading level. Time is allotted each day for students to read independently. After completing their book, students are tested to check comprehension.

Educational Service Unit #8 provides our school with a Speech and Language Pathologist and a School Psychologist. Additional services available within our school are also a Special Education program and Title I program. The Special Education program offers support for students in all areas across the curriculum. The Title I program focuses on reading and math to address students individually or in small groups on a daily basis.

6. Professional Development:

One ongoing goal of Elgin Elementary School is to provide the best possible education for our students. Knowledge of effective teaching methods, new strategies and techniques, and other classroom support are essential in the improvement of instruction. The Board of Education supports this endeavor by requiring tenured teachers to provide evidence of professional growth. These growth points can be earned by college credit, attending approved clinics, in-service meetings, by publishing professional writings, or serving on professional committees.

The administration encourages the staff to attend and participate in available in-services, workshops, school visits, and other trainings. Some of these learning opportunities are provided by Educational Service Unit #8 located in Neligh, Nebraska. Among the trainings the elementary staff has attended include: alignment of standards and curriculum, DIBELS Next, Angel, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), Student Writing Practice and Teacher Holistic Scoring, science standards, Student Record System, Phonemic Awareness, Strategies for Teaching Vocabulary, and Strategies for Teaching Alphabetic Principles.

Other opportunities provided for the staff involving professional development, first of all, include bringing outside presenters to the district. Examples would include training on the administration, implementation, and use of Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). This newly adopted achievement testing program has numerous capabilities regarding student assessment and instruction which requires training for the staff. Another example would be a consultant instructing the staff on how to effectively utilize a Promethean board. The district has recently purchased a number of Promethean boards for classrooms and this training support was very helpful.

The district's continued school improvement goal of improvement in reading and the new goal that all students who participate in the NeSA subject assessments will meet the Met or Exceed levels at 85% also provides direction for professional development. Elgin Public School is a member of and works with other Northern Tier schools, ten other small districts in northeast Nebraska, to address school improvement and pool monetary resources to provide opportunities a single district would not be able to afford. Included in this would be the implementation, training, continued training, and consultant support for the Reading Mastery Program adopted by the Elgin district and other Northern Tier schools.

7. School Leadership:

The Elgin Public School leadership structure is typical of a small school system in Nebraska. One component is a six member Board of Education that is elected by the voting patrons of the district. They are the official governing body for the school district. Other members of the educational community include the superintendent/elementary principal, teachers, support staff, students, parents, and community members. All of these groups work together to make sure a quality education with high expectations is provided for our students.

The philosophy of Elgin Public School is that it exists as a medium to serve in nurturing the academic experience of the students in a manner which will best allow them to deal competently and conscientiously with themselves as well as others, and to aid in the attainment of such skills as will provide a basis for their functioning as creative, discerning, and productive members of society.

The role of the superintendent/elementary principal is to manage the finances of the district, hire and evaluate staff, develop policies and procedures, facilitate opportunities for staff improvement primarily through staff in-services, trainings, and workshops, and work with the elementary staff on the continual improvement of instruction. Much of this focuses on meeting the school improvement goal that all students who participate in the NeSA subject assessments will meet the Met or Exceed levels at 85%.

The teachers work together to improve classroom instruction. This would include sharing information and strategies learned from attending various workshops and school visits. The teachers have worked with the school psychologist to review, discuss, and set goals for students using data from current DIBELS testing. An out-of-state professional consultant observes all Reading Mastery teachers biannually providing feedback, accommodations, and recommendations regarding their reading instruction. Facilitators are also brought in from the Educational Service Unit to assist teachers with using the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). As this is a new initiative the staff from the Educational Service Unit has been instrumental in providing training on how to administer, review, and use data for the improvement of instruction.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: NeSA

Edition/Publication Year: 2011

Publisher: Nebraska

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets the standard	88	100	100	100	100
Exceeds the standard	13	8	67	42	42
Number of students tested	8	12	9	12	12
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested	4				
2. African American Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested	2				
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested	8				
NOTES:					
Students were administered the NeSA (Nebraska State Accountability) test during the 2010-11 school year. STARS assessments were used the prior years.					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: NeSA

Edition/Publication Year: 2010

Publisher: State of Nebraska

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets the standard	88	45	100	83	100
Exceeds the standard	0	9	33	42	75
Number of students tested	8	11	9	12	12
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested	4	7			
2. African American Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested	2	1			
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Meets the standard		45			
Exceeds the standard		9			
Number of students tested	8	11			
NOTES:					
Students were administered the NeSA (Nebraska State Accountability) test during the 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years. STARS assessments were used the prior years.					

12NE2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: NeSA

Edition/Publication Year: 2011

Publisher: Nebraska

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets the standard	92	88	93	100	100
Exceeds the standard	17	25	36	38	45
Number of students tested	12	8	14	12	11
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested	6				
2. African American Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested	2				
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Meets the standard	92				
Exceeds the standard	17				
Number of students tested	12				
NOTES:					
Students were administered the NeSA (Nebraska State Accountability) test during the 2010-11 school year. STARS assessments were used the prior years.					

12NE2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: NeSA

Edition/Publication Year: 2010

Publisher: Nebraska

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets the standard	100	100	100	100	100
Exceeds the standard	25	29	83	79	50
Number of students tested	12	8	12	14	8
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested	6	4			
2. African American Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested	2				
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Meets the standard	100				
Exceeds the standard	25				
Number of students tested	12	8			
NOTES:					
Students were administered the NeSA (Nebraska State Accountability) test during the 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years. STARS assessments were used the prior years.					

12NE2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5 Test: NeSA

Edition/Publication Year: 2011

Publisher: Nebraska

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets the standard	91	100	90	91	100
Exceeds the standard	0	46	20	55	25
Number of students tested	11	13	10	11	8
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested	6				
2. African American Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Meets the standard	91				
Exceeds the standard	0				
Number of students tested	11				
NOTES:					
Students were administered the NeSA (Nebraska State Accountability) test during the 2010-11 school year. STARS assessments were used the prior years.					

12NE2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 Test: NeSA

Edition/Publication Year: 2010

Publisher: Nebraska

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets the standard	82	73	7	12	8
Exceeds the standard	27	27	4	9	6
Number of students tested	11	15	10	14	10
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets the standard		70			
Exceeds the standard		20			
Number of students tested	6	10			
2. African American Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Meets the standard	82	73			
Exceeds the standard	27	27			
Number of students tested	11	15			
NOTES:					
Students were administered the NeSA (Nebraska State Accountability) test during the 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years. STARS assessments were used the prior years.					

12NE2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 6 Test: NeSA

Edition/Publication Year: 2011

Publisher: Nebraska

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets the standard	93	90	91	100	100
Exceeds the standard	33	30	55	38	58
Number of students tested	15	10	11	8	12
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested	8				
2. African American Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested	1				
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Meets the standard	93				
Exceeds the standard	33				
Number of students tested	15				
NOTES:					
Students were administered the NeSA (Nebraska State Accountability) test during the 2010-11 school year. STARS assessments were used the prior years.					

12NE2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6 Test: NeSA

Edition/Publication Year: 2010

Publisher: Nebraska

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets the standard	100	91	100	100	100
Exceeds the standard	53	36	83	90	100
Number of students tested	15	11	12	10	13
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested	8	6			
2. African American Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets the standard					
Exceeds the standard					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Meets the standard	100	91			
Exceeds the standard	53	36			
Number of students tested	15	11			
NOTES:					
Students were administered the NeSA (Nebraska State Accountability) test during the 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years. STARS assessments were used the prior years.					

12NE2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets the standard	91	95	93	97	100
Exceeds the standard	17	27	43	43	44
Number of students tested	46	43	44	43	43
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets the standard	91	0	0	0	0
Exceeds the standard	8	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	24	0	0	0	0
2. African American Students					
Meets the standard	0	0	0	0	0
Exceeds the standard	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets the standard	0	0	0	0	0
Exceeds the standard	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
4. Special Education Students					
Meets the standard		0	0	0	0
Exceeds the standard		0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	5	0	0	0	0
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets the standard	0	0	0	0	0
Exceeds the standard	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6.					
Meets the standard	91	0	0	0	0
Exceeds the standard	17	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	46	0	0	0	0
NOTES:					

12NE2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets the standard	93	75	78	71	78
Exceeds the standard	30	25	54	52	61
Number of students tested	46	45	43	50	43
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets the standard	91	66	0	0	0
Exceeds the standard	25	18	0	0	0
Number of students tested	24	27	0	0	0
2. African American Students					
Meets the standard	0	0	0	0	0
Exceeds the standard	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets the standard	0	0	0	0	0
Exceeds the standard	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
4. Special Education Students					
Meets the standard			0	0	0
Exceeds the standard			0	0	0
Number of students tested	4	1	0	0	0
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets the standard	0	0	0	0	0
Exceeds the standard	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6.					
Meets the standard	93	75	0	0	0
Exceeds the standard	30	25	0	0	0
Number of students tested	46	45	0	0	0
NOTES:					

12NE2